

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 AID-20 OMB-01 DRC-01 EB-11 IO-14

COA-02 /171 W

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R 251555Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5222

INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIBREVILLE 0241

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GB/SG

SUBJ: VISIT OF SENGALESE PRESIDENT SENGHOR

REF: LIBREVILLE 0159

1. SUMMARY. SENGALESE PRESIDENT SENGHOR MADE STATE VISIT TO GABON FEBRUARY 19-23. VISIT MARKED BY CEREMONIAL LAVISHNESS IN LIBREVILLE AND INCLUDED TRIPS TO PORT-GENTIL, MOANDA AND FRANCEVILLE. IN VARIOUS PUBLIC STATEMENTS SENGHOR STRESSED SENGALESE-GABONESE COOPERATION AND PRAISED PRESIDENT BONGO USING NEGRITUDE AS CONCEPTUAL LINK BETWEEN THESE AND OTHER THEMES SUCH AS AFRO-ARAB SOLIDARITY AND NEEDS OF DEVELOPING NATIONS. JOINT COMMUNIQUE REFLECTED SAME CONCERNS. END SUMMARY.

2. SENGALESE PRESIDENT SENGHOR, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS WIFE AND OTHER OFFICIALS AMONG THEM THE MINISTERS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE, ARRIVED LIBREVILLE FEBRUARY 19 FOR FOUR-DAY STATE VISIT. FIRST DAY'S PROGRAM INCLUDED RECEPTION AT AIRPORT BY PRESIDENT AND MADAME BONGO AND PRESENTATION TO SENGHOR OF KEY TO THE CITY OF LIBREVILLE. SENGHOR ALSO INTRO-
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DUCED TO DIPLOMATIC CORPS WHILE STATE BANQUET FOLLOWED BY RECEPTION

AND CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS ROUNDED OUT DAY'S ACTIVITIES. FEBRUARY 20, TWO CHIEFS OF STATE TRAVELED ACROSS GABON ESTUARY TO BONGO'S BEACH HOUSE AT POINTE DENIS WHERE A WORKING SESSION REPORTEDLY DISCUSSED COMMERCIAL AND CULTURAL COOPERATION AND PARTICULARLY JOINT MERCHANT MARINE AND FISHING VENTURES. LATER SAME DAY SENGHOR HELD PRESS CONFERENCE, RECEIVED LIBREVILLE'S SENEGALESE COMMUNITY AND MANAGED TO SANDWICH IN TALK AT NATIONAL UNIVERSITY. THE 21ST AND 22ND SPENT FIRST IN PORT-GENTIL WHERE SENGHOR VISITED OIL INSTALLATIONS AND PLYWOOD FACTORY AND LATER IN MOANDA AND FRANCEVILLE. SENGHOR DEPARTED LATTER CITY FOR BRAZZAVILLE (WHERE HE WAS SCHEDULED MAKE OFFICIAL VISIT) MORNING OF 23RD AFTER SIGNATURE OF JOINT COMMUNIQUE.

3. IN ACCEPTING KEYS TO CITY SENGHOR MADE EXTENDED PLAY ON "LIBRE" IN WORD LIBREVILLE NOTING CITY'S INHABITANTS FREE BECAUSE RULED BY A LIBERAL CHIEF OF STATE. IN ALLUDING TO NEGRITUDE SENGHOR SAID CONCEPT DID NOT MEAN TAKING REFUGE IN A GHETTO. "ON THE CONTRARY, AWARE OF OUR VALUES WE ARE OPEN TO OUTSIDE WORLD PARTICULARLY TO OUR ARAB-BERBER BROTHERS NORTH OF THE SAHARA."

4. AT FEBRUARY 20 PRESS CONFERENCE SENGHOR TOUCHED ON COMMON PROBLEMS AND OUTLOOK SHARED BY SENEGAL AND GABON, NOTED RECENT RECALCITRANCE OF SENEGALESE STUDENTS CAUSED BY EXTERNAL FORCES, AND CHARACTERIZED MIDDLE EAST WAS AS "USELESS." SENGHOR RENDERED HOMAGE TO SECRETARY KISSINGER FOR HIS EFFORTS IN TRYING TO ARRIVE AT SOLUTION TO THE ME PROBLEM. SENGHOR ALSO DEFENDED SINGLE PARTY SYSTEM FOR AFRICAN CONTINENT NOTING THAT DEMOCRACY PRACTICED WITHIN THE PARTY AND THAT INTERPLAY OF PARTIES WHICH EXISTS IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WOULD IN AFRICA ONLY MEAN RUIN OF THE NATION AND ENCOURAGE COUPS, DISORDER AND ANARCHY. RE OCAM SENGHOR SAID HE WOULD REFRAIN FROM JUDGING CHIEFS OF STATE WHO FEEL THEY SHOULD LEAVE ORGANIZATION BUT, IN ANY EVENT, THOROUGH REORGANIZATION OF OCAM ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.

5. JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED FROM FRANCEVILLE FEBRUARY 23 HIGHLIGHTED FOLLOWING AS MAJOR ANTICIPATED RESULTS OF CONFIDENTIAL

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TALKS BETWEEN SENGHOR AND BONGO: MULTIPLYING CONSULTATIONS AND EXCHANGES BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTORS IN THE TWO COUNTRIES; REINFORCING MATERIAL AND HUMAN COOPERATION, PARTICULARLY IN CULTURAL, COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL AREAS AND SPECIFICALLY IN FISHING AND MERCHANT MARINE INDUSTRIES. ON THE LEVEL OF POLITICAL STATEMENT, COMMUNIQUE UNDERLINED SIMILARITY IN VIEWS OF TWO PRESIDENTS REGARDING SUCH INTERNATIONAL AND INTER-

AFRICAN PROBLEMS AS PEACE, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY, ECONOMIC SITUATION OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, LIBERATION OF AFRICAN TERRITORIES STILL UNDER FOREIGN DOMINATION, AND ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION. COMMUNIQUE ALSO INDICATED THAT TWO CHIEFS DECIDED HARMONIZE POSITIONS IN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES AND THATY THEY DENOUNCED "THE RULES OF THE ECONOMIC MONETARY AND COMMERCIAL GAME" IMPOSED BY THE INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS.

6. COMMENT: BONGO WENT ALL OUT TO FETE HIS SENEGALESE VISITOR AND IN RETURN RECEIVED ARTICULATE SUPPORT NOT ONLY FOR HIS OWN PERSONAL POSITION BUT ALSO FOR HIS VIEWS ON SUCH MATTERS AS AFRO-ARAB COOPERATION, FUTURE OF OCAM, AND ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE OF THIRD WORLD NATIONS. COUNTRYMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC COOPERATION, LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, FISHING INDUSTRY, MARINE TRANSPORTATION, NONALIGNED NATIONS, CHIEF OF STATE VISITS, MINISTERIAL VIS ITS, JOINT VENTURES, PRESS CONFERENCES, COMMUNIQUE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: rowelle0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LIBREV00241
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: LIBREVILLE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740212/aaaaakow.tel
Line Count: 130
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: LIBREVILLE 0159
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: rowelle0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 APR 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <30-Sep-2002 by rowelle0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT OF SENEGALESE PRESIDENT SENGHOR
TAGS: PFOR, GB, SG, OCAM, (SENGHOR, LEOPOLD SEDAR), (BONGO, ALBERT BERNARD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005